



PA 19-197—sHB 7297

Environment Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING QUARANTINE AND DISPOSAL ORDERS OF ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS

SUMMARY: This act makes changes to the state’s laws on quarantining a biting or attacking animal. Among its changes, the act does the following:

1. requires, instead of authorizes, an animal control officer (ACO) to quarantine an animal that is rabid, is suspected of being rabid, or was exposed to a rabid or wild animal;
2. shortens the mandatory quarantine period for a biting or attacking dog, cat, or ferret from 14 to 10 days;
3. revises where such a dog, cat, or ferret may be quarantined based on its rabies vaccination status;
4. requires the state veterinarian, instead of the agriculture commissioner, or his designee to examine a quarantined dog, cat, or ferret to determine whether to continue or end the quarantine on the 10th day;
5. requires the state veterinarian, instead of an ACO, to determine the quarantine and disposition of other biting or attacking animals, including a quarantine’s length and location;
6. reduces the penalty for violating a quarantine order from a class D misdemeanor to a fine of up to \$100; and
7. eliminates a requirement that an ACO give notice of an animal’s quarantine to the agriculture commissioner and person bitten or attacked.

Under prior law, police and guide dogs were generally exempt from the quarantine laws if they were under their handler’s or owner’s control, were vaccinated, and received routine veterinary care. The act eliminates this exemption.

The act also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019

QUARANTINE OF A DOG, CAT, OR FERRET

Prior law required a biting or attacking animal to be quarantined in a public pound or a veterinary hospital, commercial kennel, or other building the agriculture commissioner approved of for that purpose. If the attack occurred on the owner’s premises, the animal could also be quarantined there.

Under the act, a biting or attacking dog, cat, or ferret must be quarantined (1) in a public pound, veterinary hospital, or commercial kennel approved by the state veterinarian or (2) on the premises of the animal’s owner or keeper if the ACO determines it is adequate. However, if the animal does not have a current rabies vaccination, then it may be quarantined on the owner’s or keeper’s premises only

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if (1) a licensed veterinarian determines it is medically necessary, (2) the municipality or agency issuing the order finds it acceptable, and (3) the animal receives a rabies vaccination on the 10th day of quarantine.

During the quarantine, the dog, cat, or ferret must be observed for signs of rabies. On the 10th day of quarantine, the act requires the state veterinarian or his designee to examine the animal to determine whether to continue or end the quarantine.

As under existing law, the animal's owner or keeper must pay all costs related to the quarantine, including veterinary and rabies vaccination and testing expenses and, if necessary, euthanasia.

OTHER BITING OR ATTACKING ANIMALS

Under the act, the state veterinarian, instead of an ACO as under prior law, must determine the management, confinement, quarantine, or disposition of biting animals other than dogs, cats, or ferrets. In making determinations, the state veterinarian must consider (1) the animal's age, general health, and rabies vaccination status and (2) current national recommendations for preventing and controlling rabies.